

**Meeting of the NSA Board of Directors.  
Maryland Club, Baltimore, MD  
10 a.m., January 17, 2020**

**NSA Board Members:** Robert Bonnie, Sean Clancy, Tom Collins, Kate Dalton, Peter Fenwick, Jack Fisher, Alfred Griffin, Michael Hankin, Mason Lampton, Virginia Lazenby, Jeff LeHew, Meriwether Morris, Guy Torsilieri.

**NSA Board Members absent:** Doug Fout, Eve Ledyard

**NSA Staff:** William Gallo, Peter McGivney, Jillian Tullock, Don Clippinger

**Other Guests:** Beverly Steinman, Reynolds Cowles, Alan Foreman

Outgoing Board Chairman Beverly Steinman called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

1. Officer Elections

The Board met in Executive Session to unanimously elect a new slate of officers as follows:

Chairman:	Guy Torsilieri
President:	Al Griffin
Vice-President:	Virginia Lazenby
Treasurer:	Mason Lampton
Secretary:	Robert Bonnie

2. Minutes

Minutes from the NSA November 20, 2019 board meeting were unanimously approved.

3. Out-going President's Report

Guy Torsilieri gave a report on the state of steeplechasing, focusing on existing race meets, opportunities at the flat tracks, and the potential for new opportunities.

Mr. Torsilieri then gave a tribute to Beverly Steinman's service to American steeplechasing as Chairman of the NSA, as a longtime supporter and leader of the Middleburg Spring Races, the Carolina Cup, and the Colonial Cup, and as an owner and supporter of racing. Ms. Steinman was presented with a gift from the Board and received a standing ovation.

4. Nominating Committee Report

Mike Hankin briefly reported on the unanimous election of new NSA officers for 2020.

5. New President's Report

Al Griffin began his tenure as President with appreciation and tribute to out-going President Guy Torsilieri for his leadership of the NSA Board for 10 years and for his tireless work for steeplechasing both as part of the NSA and as the director of the Far Hills Races. Mr. Torsilieri was presented with a bronze from the Board and received a standing ovation.

Dr. Griffin then presented his priorities for the NSA. He plans to re-organize the Committee structure of the Board by creating a Communications Committee to address video and other communications, an Administration

Committee to address NSA administrative and staffing issues, and a Rider Relations Committee. The Promotions and Growth Committee and Safety Committee will continue.

Dr. Griffin then discussed his interest in improving communications and transparency with the broader American steeplechasing community. In particular, he asked that NSA publish Board minutes soon after meetings for distribution to the public.

#### 6. 2020 Racing Preview

Bill Gallo provided a preview of the 2020 racing season. He noted, among other things, the addition of a sanctioned race at the Cheshire Point to Point, the new irrigated turf course at the Tryon races, the temporary move of the Fair Hill Races to Laurel Race Track in May, plans for summer racing at Monmouth Park, Parx, Saratoga and Colonial Downs, and other issues.

Mr. Hankin raised the need to split maiden races to allow for more opportunities for young horses. A lengthy discussion ensued including issues related to purse size, challenges for meets, the need to balance purse size and opportunity, and other issues. The Board agreed that the broad policy should be to support splitting maiden races to promote new racing opportunities and to work closely with meets to do that in a “practical and financially sustainable manner.”

#### 7. Safety Committee

Reynolds Cowles and Alan Foreman gave a lengthy presentation of safety issues in steeplechasing noting that the safety of horse and rider must be paramount and that, as a sport, we must maintain a “social license” with the public-at-large in order to continue to operate. Dr. Cowles reviewed NSA horse fatality statistics noting that the goal is to have zero fatalities.

Mr. Foreman then gave a presentation about safety issues in thoroughbred racing generally and, specifically, described at length the Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred industry’s strategic plan to improve safety of racing. The goal of that plan is to reduce equine injuries and fatalities and to minimize risks to jockeys. Mr. Foreman emphasized a “risk management approach” that identifies, prioritizes and mitigates risks. He noted that the plan requires each jurisdiction to have an “Equine Medical Director” and that Dr. Cowles has been designated as such for the NSA. Mr. Foreman discussed medication issues, reporting and accountability.

Dr. Cowles was asked about NSA’s shoe policy and the Safety Committees work to clarify such policy.

#### 8. Promotion and Growth Committee

Dr. Griffin gave an update on the status of NSA steward’s adjudication video and livestreaming. Robert Bonnie noted the Executive Committee’s intense focus on video and livestreaming over the last year. Despite challenges, many lessons were learned from the NSA’s experience in 2019. Dr. Griffin then reported on the status of the contracting process for stewards’ adjudication video for the 2020 season and solicited Board input. He then discussed the opportunity for livestreaming in 2020 and the potential for a new approach involving pay-per-view. Dr. Griffin discussed the use of an app by the Charleston Races and the potential to learn from their expertise and experience.

#### 9. Finance Report

Mr. Torsilieri presented the 2019 and 2020 budget for the NSA. The 2020 budget for the NSA is projected to be approximately \$1.2 million with about 70% of revenue coming from entry fees, about 10% from sanction fees, and about 8% from patron memberships. On the expense side, about 32% of the budget supports salaries, and 22% supports video services.

#### 10. Old Business

Peter Fenwick raised concerns about the change in NSA entry fees whereby NSA was considering restructuring those fees to promote opportunities for smaller owners and trainers. While agreeing with that goal, Mr. Fenwick raised concerns about unintended consequences that might create challenges for meets related to stabling expenses. Others raised the concern about “gaming” of entries by some entrants. The Board engaged in a lengthy discussion which concluded with Dr. Griffin agreeing to work with some members of the Board and staff in the coming days to resolve the issue.

#### 11. New Business

Merriweather Morris asked the Board to consider the shortage of jockeys. Dr. Griffin recognized the importance of the issue and noted that it would be a priority for the new Jockey Relations Committee.

Sean Clancy raised the issue of crisis management and the selection of videos shown at the NSA awards banquet.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 p.m.